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| Annotate the biographical information: Underline key ideas, circle words you don’t know or are important, write questions you may have as you read. | Write the main idea for each paragraph. |
| ***“The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost***  **Author Biography and Historical Context**    Robert Frost believed in the power of poetry. In an essay titled “Education by Poetry,” he wrote: “The person who gets close enough to poetry, he is going to know more about the word belief than anybody else knows.” Robert Frost must have been speaking about his own experiences with poetry, as it was a central part of his life.  Robert Frost lived from 1874 – 1963. Though he was born in San Francisco, he moved back to his family’s home in New England after his father died when he was a young boy. Both his mother and grandfather were teachers who made sure Robert read a wide variety of materials.  As a young man, Frost attended Dartmouth College and Harvard, but he didn’t graduate from either. Instead, he worked as a farmer, an editor, and a schoolteacher. As a young man, he wrote in his spare time, but his poems were rejected for publication. When his first poem was published in 1894, he was paid $15 for it.  In 1911, he decided to move to England in hopes of getting his poetry published there. By this time, he was married and had children. In England, he met other poets. His first book of poetry was published in England in 1913, and it was well received. When he returned to the United States, he was surprised by the favorable American reviews of his poems. The same publishers who had rejected his poems years before were now asking him for his poetry! He continued to teach and received invitations to lecture and read his poetry throughout the country.  In 1924, 1931, 1937, and 1943, he won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry. He was appointed the Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress (which is called the Poet Laureate today). Additionally, throughout his life, he received forty-four honorary degrees and numerous awards including a Congressional gold medal in 1960 for his poetry. There is even had a mountain in Vermont named after him. In 1960, he was asked to read at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy – the first time such an invitation had been extended to a poet.  Robert Frost’s work is still extremely popular today. His poems deal with simple events and rural settings. Often the topics and dialect are unique to the New England region. While the topics of his poems may be simple, like a road in the case of *The Road Not Taken*, they contain insight into human nature and life.  **Historical Background**  **What is the Pulitzer Prize?**  Joseph Pulitzer was a man who embodied the American dream. He was born in  Hungary, moved to America, and through hard work and determination, built a  successful newspaper that created standards in journalism. In his will, he established the Pulitzer Prize. The prize would be awarded each year for journalism, history, and biography. Later, awards were added for poetry, music and photography. The Pulitzer Prize is considered a great honor by all who receive it.  **A Poet at the Presidential Inauguration**  John F. Kennedy invited Robert Frost to speak at his inauguration on January 20, 1961. Like many people of the time, Frost was excited by the energy and enthusiasm the new president promised to bring to the country. Frost wrote a poem for the occasion called *Dedication*. However, Inauguration Day was bright and sunny, and an elderly Frost had difficulty reading the printed copy of the poem. After an attempt to read his new poem, Frost instead recited the poem *The Gift Outright* from memory. |  |

Directions: Write a brief summary of the biographical information, and answer the following questions on a **separate** piece of paper using complete sentences.

1. When and where did Robert Frost live?

2. What kinds of careers did Robert Frost have in order to support his family?

3. How do you know that Robert Frost was dedicated to writing poetry?

4. What do you think might have been one of the best awards or honors Robert Frost received in his lifetime? Why do you think that?

5. Why do you think he chose to write about topics such as rural life and life in New England?

6. Read the quote at the beginning of the article. How do you think Frost felt about poetry? Why do you think that?

7. Analyze what you think the word belief in the quote at the top of the article means. Explain your answer.